

Remarks/Arguments

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claims 16 for informalities. However, claim 16 has been cancelled. Thus, this objection is moot. Furthermore, the original features of claim 16, which have been incorporated into claim 21, have been corrected in amended claim 21.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claims 38-45 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential structural cooperative relationships of elements. However, claims 38-45 have been cancelled and therefore, this rejection is moot.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,515,967 to Wei et al. However, claims 25 and 26 have been cancelled rendering this rejection moot.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,228,042 to Gauthier et al in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,034,948 to Nakamura et al. However, claims 1-5 have been cancelled rendering this rejection moot.

The Examiner rejected claims 6-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,034,948 to Nakamura et al in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,228,042 to Gauthier et al. However, claims 6-15 have been cancelled rendering this rejection moot.

The Examiner rejected claims 16-20 and 27-30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,515,967 to Wei et al in view of U.S. Patent

No. 6,522,661 to Min. However, claim 16 has been cancelled and claims 17, which claims 18-20 depend from, and claim 27, which claims 28-30 depend from, have been amended to depend on currently amended claims 21 and 33 respectively. Claims 21 and 33, which the Examiner acknowledges as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, have been amended accordingly. Therefore, this rejection of claims 16-20 and 27-30 is rendered moot.

Allowable Subject matter

The Examiner objected to claims 21-24 and 33-37 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but acknowledges that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, original claim 21 which depended on original claim 16 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 16 while canceling claim 16. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 21 is in a condition for allowance. Claims 22-24 depend from claim 21 and therefore, are likewise in a condition for allowance.

Likewise, original claim 33, which depended on claim 25 and 26, has been amended to include all of the limitations of claims 25 and 26 while claims 25 and 26 have been cancelled. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 33 is in a condition for allowance. Claims 34-37 depend from claim 33 and therefore, are likewise in a condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 17-24 and 27-37 are in a condition for allowance. Early issuance of Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact the undersigned at (503) 796-2099.

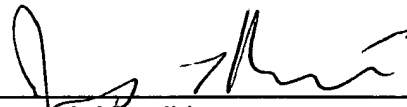
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge shortages or credit overpayments to Deposit Account No. 500393.

Respectfully submitted,

SCHWABE, WILLIAMSON & WYATT, P.C.

Dated: _____

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